

Travels in T_EX Land: Trying T_EXworks (with Windows XP)

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May 26, 2009

1 Installation

I have been hearing about T_EXworks for a year or more and decided to try it. Googling on “T_EXworks” got me to the T_EXworks webpage (<http://www.tug.org/texworks/>). From there I followed the link “A T_EXworks page by Alain Delmotte has a draft manual and Windows binaries” (<http://www.leliseron.org/texworks/>) and downloaded the draft manual, Windows binary, and “needed dll” to a directory I called T_EXworks. (Also, what appears to be a development website is at <http://code.google.com/p/texworks/>.)

Clicking on the T_EXworks.exe file, the system started, and I opened a L^AT_EX file which appeared in a T_EX editing window along with, in a parallel window, the PDF output of the file (previously compiled before my installation of T_EXworks). However, when tried to typeset the L^AT_EX file, the system told me it couldn’t find the T_EX executable files. I tried setting up the file T_EXworks-setup.ini with the contents

```
inipath = C:/a-files/TeXworks/  
libpath = C:/a-files/TeXworks/  
defaultbinpaths = C:\texmf\miktex\bin
```

as suggested on Delmotte’s T_EXworks web page, but the system still couldn’t find the T_EX executables. (I reported this problem to Alain Delmotte who confirmed it was a problem and passed it on to the T_EXworks development list.) I found the Edit > Preferences > Typesetting “Paths for TeX and related tools” window, and put the path C:\texmf\miktex\bin there, and then T_EXworks typesetting button compiled my file.

Unfortunately, the system also gave me the message

```
-synctex=1; unknown option
```

This option was apparently part of the default setup at Edit > Preferences > Typesetting in the “Processing Tools” window. My assumption is that this option was supposed to synchronize views in the editing and PDF windows. I found nothing in the manual about `synctex`, but at the T_EXworks homepage it appear to say that this feature was supported in the 2008 T_EX Live release; and I was running MiK_TE_X from an earlier release of the T_EXCollection CD and from ProT_EXt rather than T_EX Live. (Alain Delmotte told me a few days later that the feature had been added to T_EXworks after he had drafted the manual, and he indicated he would be updating the manual.)

I then installed T_EXworks on my laptop Windows computer which had the ProT_EXt distribution installed from the 2008 T_EX Collection DVD. Once again there was a message about an unknown command line option. Thus, I tentatively concluded that I had to install the T_EX Live distribution to have the `synctex` option. That’s something I didn’t really want to have to figure out at this point.

So, I used the Edit > Preferences > Typesetting sequence again to get to the “Processing Tools,” selected pdfL^AT_EX, clicked the Edit button, selected the `synctex` line, and deleted it with the minus sign button. I don’t know if I had to restart T_EXworksto get this configuration change to take effect, but I did a restart; and then my test L^AT_EX file compiled and the recompiled version appeared in the PDF window. Nice!

(Alain Demotte sent me the following comment about my troubles with `synctex`:

It appears that the command for `synctex`: `-synctex=1` doesn't work under Windows, because it produces a compressed file which can't be used. Using `-synctex=-1` we get an uncompressed synchronisation file which can be used. Further, one has to use a recent version of `pdftex` (perhaps `TeX Live2008!!`) with `synctex` included, and there should be no accented character in any of the path for the `TeXworks` configuration folder and for the file to be compiled. Example: I first had my main folder as

```
c:\nDocuments and Settings\nHP Propriétaires
```

That “é” prevented the work of `synctex`. On another occasion, the folder in which the `.tex` file [resided] also had an accented characters — same problem.

)

2 Use

I continued to write this note using `TeXworks`, now that I had `TeXworks` running on my computer. I also printed out the manual (“Short manual for `TeXworks` by Alain Delmotte), in case I had to look up something.

My first observation is that when `TeXworks` starts, its default `TeX` engine (shown in the little window to the right of big green “typeset” button) was `pdfTeX`. I tried changing the name in the window to `pdfLaTeX`, but that apparently wasn't saved when `TeXworks` was exited and restarted. I looked around the `TeXworks` directory and found the file `TeXworks.ini` in the subdirectory `TUG`, and in that found the line

```
defaultEngine=pdfTeX
```

which I changed to specify `pdfLaTeX`. The next time I started `TeXworks`, `pdfLaTeX` was shown as the default engine. (Alain Delmotte noted to me as part of our email exchange that “It is also possible to change this from within `TeXworks`: Edit > Preferences > Typesetting, and below select the engine. But take care that when clicking ‘OK’ to the dialog box, the dropdown window, right to the ‘typeset’ button still shows `pdftex`, still the new selected engine is saved (but not active if not changed).”)

Looking at the cursor in the PDF window, I noticed it showed a little magnifying glass. Pushing the left button of the mouse magnifies whatever is in a circle five or so words in diameter around the cursor. This is a pretty neat feature, allowing the PDF view to be from a fairly zoomed-out position to get more on the screen while allowing a close look at a few words. I looked in the manual, finally; and it discussed this feature in some detail.

Looking onward in the manual, it talked about auto-completion. This is nice. For instance, rather than typing `LaTeX` everytime, I can type `latex` followed by the tab key, and `latex` is converted to `\LaTeX`. I had noticed a directory `completions` in my `TeXworks` directory, and in that directory was the file `tw-latex.txt` containing *lots* of completion definitions. Curiously, there was no definition in the default file for `\TeXworks` and `\textit` which I needed in the preceding sentence. (Looking farther in the manual, I also found the list of completion definitions there.)

I also read about spelling correction in the manual, but nothing happened when I clicked on the menu command. I looked in the `dictionaries` directory in my `TeXworks` directory, and it was empty. I googled for `texworks` dictionaries) and found the webpage <http://code.google.com/p/texworks/wiki/SpellingDictionaries> which told me that `TeXworks` comes without bundled dictionaries and told me how to obtain and install a dictionary. Following the directions, I went to the `OpenOffice.org` project website, found the `en_US.zip` file, downloaded and unzipped it, and installed the `en_US.aff` and `en_US.dic` files in the `dictionaries` directory. I restarted `TeXworks`, and it highlighted non-English words. (Alain Demotte noted that this information should be added to his manual.)

[more when I experience it]

Acknowledgments

Karl Berry noted some typos and gave me some pointers. Alain Demotte was wonderfully responsive when I sent him my first notes on using T_EXworksand, as you have seen, I have quoted him extensively. Lance Carnes directed me to several T_EXworks resources including the website of David Perry (<http://scholarsfonts.net/>) who is posting drafts of the T_EXworkstutorial he is writing from the point of view of a user who is new to both T_EXworks and T_EX. The deliberations of the T_EXworks discussion group is informative: <http://www.tug.org/mailman/listinfo/texworks>

Biography

David Walden is retired after a career as an engineer, engineering manager, and general manager involved with research and development of computer and other high tech systems. He holds an undergraduate math degree and completed a graduate school sequence of courses in computer science. More history is at www.walden-family.com/dave.